

January 2008

RE: EDEExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0

Dear EDEExpress Users:

Federal Student Aid is pleased to announce the availability of EDEExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0. Release 1.0 is the initial EDEExpress software release for the 2008-2009 award cycle and includes the Application Processing and Packaging modules, and Global functionality (such as Security setup, Document Tracking, and User Database).

This letter includes the following information:

- An overview of EDEExpress 2008-2009, Release 1.0
- A list of 2008-2009 enhancements available in Release 1.0
- Results gathered from EDEExpress benchmark testing
- Reminders on backing up and optimizing your EDEExpress database

Note: At the time this software was prepared, the U.S. Department of Education's (ED's) Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriation had not been approved and the 2008-2009 Federal Pell Grant Payment and Disbursement Schedule included in Release 1.0 was based on the current maximum Pell Grant award. Now that the appropriations bill has been enacted, we will update the Pell Grant Payment Schedule through a future release of EDEExpress. If you use the EDEExpress Packaging module to award Pell Grants, you will want to wait until the updated software is available.

How to Get the Software and Documentation

You can download Release 1.0 and related user documentation from ED's Federal Student Aid Download (FSAdownload) Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Instructions for downloading EDEExpress are located in the "Downloading Documentation and Software from the FSAdownload Web Site" section of the *2008-2009 Installation Guide for EDEExpress for Windows*.

Note: Some organizations restrict their users from downloading programs from Internet sites. If you have trouble downloading, contact your technical support staff to ensure that you have full download rights.

If You Have Technical Support Questions

If you have questions regarding EDEExpress installation or functionality, have trouble accessing the FSAdownload Web site, or you require other technical assistance, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support.

You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CT), at **800/330-5947 (TDD/TTY 800/511-5806)**. You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to CPSSAIG@ed.gov. A representative will respond within one business day.

You can also post questions regarding EDEExpress on FSATECH. FSATECH is an electronic mailing list for technical questions about Federal Student Aid systems, software, and mainframe products. For more information about FSATECH, including how to subscribe, go to fsa4schools.ed.gov, click “Listserve/Mailing Lists” on the left menu, and click the “FSATech listserv” link.

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EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0

EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0 consists of two software modules:

- Application Processing
- Packaging

In addition, Global functionality applicable to all modules, such as Security setup, Document Tracking, and User Database setup and entry, is added during any installation of EDExpress.

EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 2.0 (scheduled for release in April 2008) adds Pell and Direct Loan functionality. The Pell module includes origination and disbursement functionality for the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant).

Release 1.0 does not overwrite your EDExpress for Windows 2007-2008 database; instead, it creates a new database.

Section 508 Compliance

To comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, EDExpress 2008-2009 is compatible with screen reader technology used by the visually impaired. Screen reader software cannot interpret color shading in EDExpress software entry fields or directly read the contents of software grid cells. To accommodate these restrictions, EDExpress 2008-2009 includes the following features:

- All EDExpress fields that are shaded yellow to indicate they are required also display a “-R” after the software label. The “-R” indicates the field is required.
- All EDExpress fields that are shaded blue after a previously saved value has been modified also display a “-C” after the software label. The “-C” text indicates the field has been changed. If the change is made to a field that is shaded yellow, the “-C” text will replace the “-R” text after the label.
- All EDExpress grids display “floating” text descriptions of the contents of grid cells when cells are selected. The text displays one cell above (or below, if the first cell is selected) the selected cell. The text lists Row number, Column title, and (if applicable) the current Value. Clicking once in a cell, or using the Tab key or arrow keys to move to a cell, displays the text. Clicking a second time, or using the Tab key or arrow keys to move from a cell, hides the text.

- Floating text is always enabled for the SYSADMIN user ID and always displays in the Startup Information dialog box. To disable the floating text, go to **Tools, Setup, Security Users** and create a new user ID and password. Exit EDEExpress, and log back in with your new user ID and password. For all user IDs other than SYSADMIN, floating text is disabled by default. To enable floating text, select the **Enable 508 Grid Functionality?** checkbox in the Security Users dialog box.

Note: Users always see the “-R” and “-C” labels added to software fields.

Product Updates for Microsoft Windows Vista

At this time, we have not certified the Microsoft Corporation’s Windows Vista as a supported operating system for EDEExpress or the other EDESuite software products. This guidance also applies to the Local Area Network (LAN) or “server” version of Windows, known as Windows Server 2008, which we understand will be released by the Microsoft Corporation in 2008. We will communicate about additional supported operating systems after completion of our certification process.

Product Enhancements

The following product enhancements have been incorporated into EDEExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0.

General

- **Updated Cycle References and Message Classes** – We updated software labels, online help, reports, and other functionality throughout EDEExpress to reference the 2008-2009 cycle. Message classes with cycle indicators are also updated for 2008-2009 in File Management (**Tools, Setup, Global, File Management**) and in various Import and Export dialog boxes throughout EDEExpress.
- **Updated EDEExpress Icon and Splash Screen Color to Match 2008-2009 FAFSA** – The EDEExpress software’s Windows icon and splash screen (which displays when you first start the software in Windows) have been color-coded orange to match the 2008-2009 FAFSA form.
- **Updated HERA Overview Help Topics** – We updated Help topics available in Global, Application Processing, Packaging, and Query online Help for 2008-2009 that provide detailed information and guidance on EDEExpress changes related to the HERA. The topics are titled “Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG),” “National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant,” “Graduate and Professional Student PLUS Loan (Grad PLUS),” and “Other HERA Changes Overview.” The topics are accessed by clicking **Help, Help Topics** from the EDEExpress menu bar, selecting the **Index** tab, and typing the name of the topic you want to view.

Global

The following enhancements have been made to EDEExpress 2008-2009 Global functionality (applicable to all EDEExpress releases).

ED-Initiated Import

- **Updated ED-Initiated Import Message Class for ACG Data File** – The 2008-2009 version of the ACG Data File (message class **ED2009OP**) can be imported and printed using the EDEExpress Global ED-initiated Import function. The ACG Data File contains ACG student self-identification data entered on FAFSA on the Web or FAA Access to CPS Online, or by calling the FSAIC, and can be used as part of eligibility determination and verification procedures. The report is print-only, and the data is not stored in the EDEExpress database. You must define the ACG Data File message class in **Tools, Setup, Global, ED Initiated Imports** before you can import ACG Data Files you received. A record layout for the ACG Data File is available in the Record Layouts section of the *2008-2009 Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) Technical Reference*, on the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Note: Due to a limitation in the number of comment codes that can be assigned to a given ISIR transaction, ACG-related comment codes may not always appear on the ISIR for ACG-eligible students. Be sure to check ACG Data Files (ED2009OP) for additional ACG eligibility information.

- **Added High School Graduation Year to ACG Data File** – We added High School Graduation Year to the information collected during the ACG self-identification process on FAFSA on the Web and to the ACG Data File (ED2009OP), which can be imported into EDEExpress.

Application Processing

The following enhancements have been made to the EDEExpress 2008-2009, Release 1.0 Application Processing module.

ISIR View, Print, and Query

- **Relabeled ISIR Fields** – For the 2008-2009 ISIR, we have relabeled several fields as follows to match changes to the FAFSA and at the CPS:
 - The “FAA Adjustment” field is now labeled “Professional Judgment.”
 - The “Are You Male?” field is now labeled “Male or Female?” Valid responses are **1** (Male), **2** (Female), or blank.
 - The “HS Diploma or GED Received?” field is now labeled “High School or Equivalent?” Valid values are **1** (High School Diploma), **2** (GED), **3** (Home Schooled), **4** (Other), or blank.

- **Additional Federal School Code and Housing Plans Responses Display on ISIR Review Tab, Available for Selection in File Format and Query** – Four additional Federal School Codes and Housing Plans codes have been added to the existing six choices for students filing applications or making corrections using FAFSA on the Web. All ten school and housing plans codes can be selected in File Formats from the App Express module, used in App Express queries, and viewed on the ISIR Review tab. The additional four school codes and housing plans codes do not print on the ISIR.
- **New Non-Verifiable Rejects Print on ISIR, Display on ISIR Review Tab, Available for Selection in Query** – We added two new non-verifiable reject codes for 2008-2009. These reject codes print on the ISIR, can be used in App Express queries, and can be viewed on the ISIR Review tab. The new reject codes are as follows:
 - Reject code 4 is returned in the ISIR record when the Marital Status Date is greater than the Date Application Completed. An FAA can override the reject on FAA Access to CPS Online by setting the reject override flag (Reject Override Code 4).
 - Reject code 20 is returned in the ISIR record when the student’s income meets the IRS criteria for filing a tax return, but the student is a non-filer. A financial aid administrator can override the reject on FAA Access to CPS Online by setting the reject override flag (Reject Override Code 20)
 - New Transaction Data Source/Type Codes Added for English/Spanish Versions of FAFSA4caster, Spanish SAR, and Spanish Corrections on the Web. New Transaction Data Source/Type Codes have been added for English and Spanish ISIRs generated for students who, when prompted, allow FAFSA on the Web to transfer 2007-2008 FAFSA4caster data into their 2008-2009 application. We also added codes for ISIRs generated by Spanish Corrections on the Web activity or corrections to Spanish Student Aid Reports (SARs). The codes appear as text values on the ISIR. Query Value Help includes the new values.
- **Removed Parent/Student Heading Labels for ISIR Steps Four and Five** – In STEP FOUR (PARENTS) and STEP FIVE (STUDENT HH) of the ISIR, the words “Parent” and “Student” no longer print in front of “Food Stamp Benefits,” “TANF Benefits,” “WIC Benefits,” “Supplemental Security Income Benefits,” or “Free or Reduced Price School Lunch Benefits” fields. We made this change to eliminate redundancy in the labels for these fields.

Note: See *The 2008-2009 ISIR Guide*, available at fsadownload.ed.gov, for more detailed information on changes to the ISIR for 2008-2009.

NSLDS View and Print

- **New and Relabeled ACG and National SMART Grant NSLDS Data Elements on ISIR Record** – Five new NSLDS data elements for the ACG and National SMART Grant are included in the 2008-2009 ISIR record:
 - Percent Eligibility Used by Scheduled Award
 - Total Percent Eligibility Used by Academic Year Level
 - Award Year
 - ACG Scheduled Award
 - National SMART Grant Scheduled Award
 - We also relabeled the NSLDS element “Year in School” to “Academic Year Level.”

NSLDS data elements included in the ISIR record are viewed in EDEExpress from a student’s record (**View, NSLDS**) or printed on the NSLDS report (**File, Print, App Express, NSLDS**).

- **Relabeled Pell-Specific NSLDS Data Elements in View and Print** – In the NSLDS Financial Aid History dialog box, we updated the Pell label “% Scheduled Award Used” to “% Scheduled Award Used by Award Year.”
- **Added Loan-Specific NSLDS Flags to View and Print** – Three new loan-specific fields have been added to the NSLDS information returned in the ISIR record: “Undergraduate Subsidized Loan Limit Flag,” “Undergraduate Combined Loan Limit Flag,” and “NSLDS Fraud Loan Flag.” The fields appear in the NSLDS Financial Aid History dialog box (**View, NSLDS**) and on the printed ISIR.
- **Relabeled Loan-Specific NSLDS Flags in View and Print** – In the NSLDS Financial Aid History dialog box, we changed the label “Subsidized Loan Limit Flag” to “Graduate Subsidized Loan Limit Flag” and the label “Combined Loan Limit Flag” to “Graduate Combined Loan Limit Flag.”

Packaging

No changes were made to the Packaging module for EDEExpress 2008-2009, Release 1.0.

Enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online

Before using the EDEExpress interface with the FAA Access to CPS Online Web site, the Destination Point Administrator (DPA) should verify enrollment is completed for FAA Access to CPS Online Web site services. The DPA should ensure during this process that individual users at your school performing FAFSA or ISIR correction data entry tasks are enrolled for these services.

Note: Your DPA must also enroll individual users at your school for access to the Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) and ISIR Analysis Tool Web sites, which are part of FAA Access to CPS Online. After enrollment is complete, users can access these products from the EDEExpress View menu.

Enrollment for FAA Access to CPS Online, R2T4 on the Web, and the ISIR Analysis Tool is accomplished through the SAIG Enrollment Web site, located at fsawebenroll.ed.gov.

2008-2009 EDE and EDEExpress Packaging Technical References

The 2008-2009 versions of the *Electronic Data Exchange (EDE) Technical Reference* and the *EDEExpress Packaging Technical Reference* provide technical guidance and record layouts for schools or other organizations that need to interface local software or mainframe systems with EDEExpress 2008-2009. The *EDEExpress Packaging Technical Reference* also contains worksheets you can use to help plan and implement your Packaging module setup in EDEExpress 2008-2009.

The most recent versions of the technical references can be downloaded from the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

EDExpress Benchmarking

We performed benchmarking tests on the EDExpress for Windows 2008-2009, Release 1.0 software to determine how it operates in certain operating environments. These tests were all completed on a Pentium 1000 MHz with 512 MB RAM.

Imports

The benchmarking results for EDExpress import files are as follows:

- Records were imported into an empty database.
- The Benchmarking Volume is the type and number of records that were imported in the test.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the Import dialog box to begin the import process until the import statistics are displayed.

Imports

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
ISIR Data	Windows 2000	1000	41 seconds
	Windows XP	1000	40 seconds

Reports

The benchmarking results for EDEExpress reports and lists are as follows:

- The Benchmarking Volume is the number of records or approximate number of pages that were printed in the test.
- The Time Elapsed column indicates the length of time starting when the user clicks OK in the EDEExpress Print dialog box through the time the operating system's Print dialog box displays.

Reports

Report	Operating System	Benchmarking Volume	Time Elapsed
Document Tracking Letter	Windows 2000	5 records	1 second
	Windows XP	5 records	1 second
Mailing Labels	Windows 2000	25 records	1 second
	Windows XP	25 records	1 second
ISIR	Windows 2000	5 records	4 seconds
	Windows XP	5 records	4 seconds
List-Processed ISIRs	Windows 2000	25 records	1 second
	Windows XP	25 records	1 second
Award Letters	Windows 2000	5 records	1 second
	Windows XP	5 records	1 second
Packaging Setup	Windows 2000	17 pages	1 second
	Windows XP	17 pages	1 second

Reminders

Back Up Your Database Regularly

You should back up your EDEExpress database file (expres89.mdb) regularly so you do not lose your data. We recommend that you back up your files after each major update to your database (for example, after updating a large group of student records), or at least once a week. You should also back up your data before and after you run the software utilities as a precautionary measure.

EDEExpress does not include a backup utility. You must use your own backup system. Be sure to test your backup system regularly to verify that you can reliably restore your database.

Optimize Your Database with Software Utilities

EDEExpress contains utilities enabling you to optimize your database to prevent problems. We recommend that you run the Compact and Repair Database and Verify Database utilities at least once a week. Be sure to create a backup of your database before and after running these utilities.

Run the software utilities in the following order:

- Compact and Repair Database
- Verify Database
- Compact and Repair Database

Run the Compact and Repair Database Utility

The Compact and Repair Database utility resolves inconsistencies in record storage and improves the performance of the EDEExpress database. Running this utility at least once per week helps to prevent database problems.

Events such as a power outage or a Local Area Network (LAN) failure can corrupt your database if it occurs while users are logged into EDEExpress. If your system functions unpredictably (for example, you start getting database error messages), run the Compact and Repair Database utility.

Running the Compact and Repair Database utility on a regular basis can make your database significantly smaller and improve EDEExpress' performance. The utility reduces the size of your database by organizing and storing records more efficiently and removes records flagged for deletion.

Warning: Before using the Compact and Repair Database utility, be sure you have space on your hard drive or LAN folder that is at least three times the current size of your EDEExpress database. You should also ensure all other users are logged out of EDEExpress before running the Compact and Repair Database utility.

Run the Verify Database Utility

Each student record in EDEExpress has multiple parts that are stored in different database tables. The Verify Database utility checks the integrity of relationships between these tables. If EDEExpress shuts down due to a program error or halts abnormally while you are processing data, links between various parts of a record may become damaged.

Verify Database repairs these damaged links within the database.

You should always run the Compact and Repair Database utility before and after running the Verify Database utility. Running this utility at least once per week is recommended as part of your preventative maintenance routine.

Warning: Before using the Verify Database utility, ensure you have hard drive or LAN folder space available equal to at least three times the current size of your EDEExpress database. You should also ensure all other users are logged out of EDEExpress before running the Verify Database utility.